

## Audio file

[1973-11-17 - 30 - Skylab Blastoff - NBC.mp3](#)

## Transcript

00:00:01

Here it comes again every morning. It's like the sunrise every morning, same thing.  
Morning, al. How's it going?

00:00:08

Still going nowhere, 8 months of drilling. What have we got to show for nothing but this miserable mud hole? There ain't no oil down here, Captain Lucas. Everybody's right about this thing. Yeah, but we don't listen to him. We just keep drilling.

00:00:20

We must be.

00:00:21

Crazy. Now listen to me. I don't care what everybody says. I know that there is oil down there. We can't give up. Now start your engine and keep drilling.

00:00:21

So that's.

00:00:50

Let's get out of here.

00:01:02

OK.

00:01:09

Happened in Texas that day. Blue America into the 20th century.

00:01:17

Oil became gasoline for cars.

00:01:20

The power for electricity and heat. It meant the age of flight and the beginning of the Gulf Oil Corporation. But someday the supply of oil is going to run out. So at Gulf, we're working with another source of energy, nuclear energy.

00:01:36

In Colorado, we built a nuclear power plant that will help provide electricity for thousands of homes cleanly and more efficiently than any other nuclear power plant in the country. At go, we keep looking for new sources of energy because we need all the energy we can get.

00:01:54

Well, the last of the Skylab astronauts are on their way and there won't be another manned American flight for 18 months. So it's kind of a poignant moment to some of us who have covered this space program and particularly to some of those who have worked in it.

00:02:07

In our Houston and at the Manned Spacecraft Center.

00:02:11

Houston Roy Neal is there with Christopher Craft, a veteran of the space program with NASA. Roy yes. Jones. Matter of fact, Day's launch is the 30th time the United States has sent men off into space, and Doctor Chris craft, the center director here in Houston, has been an integral part of every one of those flights. But remarkably, he's never actually seen a rocket go up.

00:02:33

In person have.

00:02:34

You, Chris? No, I've never been to Cape.

00:02:37

To watch one out of window, I've been in the Control Center at the Cape, and I've heard him go, but I prefer to be in the Control Center where things are going.

00:02:45

On that way you can keep an eye electronically on what's happening out.

00:02:48

Yes, well, right after liftoff. From that point on, you're really better off in the Control Center from the standpoint of what's going on, both in the launch vehicle and the spacecraft.

00:02:56

Is there any superstition in the back of your thinking, the sort of if I'm here everything will?

00:03:00

Go alright.

00:03:01

Well, I must admit that that's in the back of my mind. Yes, but still, I'd rather be in Mission Control. I'd. I'd like to know.

00:03:07

What's going on?

00:03:08

Latest word from Mission Control, by the way, finds our astronauts doing very well at the moment and today.

00:03:16

As these men go up, it occurs to me, Chris, that this is the last light for quite.

00:03:20

A.

00:03:20

While I wonder how you feel about that activity.

00:03:25

Well, I must say that I think the Skylab program has been outstanding.

00:03:30

I don't think even those of us who have worked on it so long, I expected it to go as well as it has the equipment as performed superbly.

00:03:38

I think the people at the Marshall Space Flight Center deserve a great deal of credit for that. They deserve a great deal of credit for the launch this morning. I think we're all concerned about the age of this missile and they said all the right things and it flew the.

00:03:51

Right way. And they did all the right things was right. The postponements later here we.

00:03:55

Are in a.

00:03:55

Good.

00:03:55

Launch indeed did all the right things.

00:03:58

To use the most significant portion of this flight, what are you looking forward to?

00:04:03

Well, I'm looking forward to watching Kaho Tech from here on the ground at the same.

00:04:07

Astronauts are watching it with all the telescopes they have on board.

00:04:12

And 85 days is a long time to go when you think about landing on the 8th of February. And here we are on the 16th of November. I think that's a fabulous thing for man. I think it's a sort of the base upon which we're going to build man Space Flight for a long time to come. So it's very important mission from that point of.

00:04:30

You see the base from which you'll build manned spaceflight. The real future is downstream. Quite a.

00:04:34

Bit yes, indeed it is. But the shuttle is coming along very, very well. I'm very pleased with the progress we're making in, in getting that bird built. And the shuttle is going to really revolutionize the way all of us think about space.

00:04:50

It will be more like leaving Houston intercontinental than it will leaving Cape Kennedy this morning.

00:04:55

You know to do the 30th flight, Can you believe looking back that you have accomplished that many missions?

00:05:01

Well, I I don't like to think about it because it just makes you and I that much older growing, but.

00:05:06

It's been a fabulous experience for for all of us that have been a part of it.

00:05:11

And I think the future is just as exciting the the things that we're going to be able to do with.

00:05:16

The.

00:05:16

Shuttle vehicle are just mind boggling. Some of the things we've already done in Skylab in manufacturing materials look to me like the real future for taking advantage of space.

00:05:31

And Skylab has proven all that for us, proving the worth of man and the worth of machine and the mixture of the two.

00:05:39

I think that the United States has a great thing going for them and we're going to prove that in the next.

00:05:44

Few months. Well, thank you, Chris. Thanks for sharing your thoughts on this launch with us. We've been talking with Doctor Christopher Kraft, the Johnson Space Center director, remembering 30 missions today being #30.

00:05:57

John.

00:05:59

Well, we've seen now the mercury program, the Gemini program, the Apollo program and the Skylab program. And it seems to me that they were great technological and human expressions of how people Americans can work wonders if they work together and for that alone, the space program has been valuable. I'd like to give my great thanks.

00:06:20

Roy Neal, who's covered so many of these stories with me to Jim Harts, who's also worked long and hard on the space program and all arrested NBC, who have labored in this vineyard. I'm John, Chancellor, NBC News.

00:06:42

NBC News coverage of Skylab is brought to you by the Gulf Oil Corporation as part of its continuing effort to bring you events of special importance.

00:07:02

This is the NBC television network.